

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LONDON 05372 311752Z

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00
INRE-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 INR-07 L-03 ACDA-10 NSAE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2229

SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE

INFO USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USNMR SHAPE

USCINCEUR

CINCUSNAVEUR

CINCUSAFE

USDOCOSOUTH

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

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E. O. LL652:NA

TAGS: UK, AWACS, MILI, OCON

SUBJECT: NATO AEW: MULLEY STATEMENT TO COMMONS

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 LONDON 05372 311752Z

REF: USNATO 1841

ROGER FACER, MULLEY'S PRIVATE SECRETARY, IN WAKE
OF MULLEY'S MESSAGE TO SECDEF ON NATO AEW, PROVIDED
POLITICAL-MILITARY ATTACHE WITH THE TEXT OF MULLEY'S
STATEMENT TO COMMONS ON AEW. STATEMENT IS AS FOLLOWS:
BEGIN QUOTE: WITH PERMISSION, MR. SPEAKER, I WISH

TO MAKE A STATEMENT ABOUT AIRBORNE EARLY WARNING AIRCRAFT.

FOLLOWING THE NATO MINISTERIAL MEETING ON 25TH MARCH, THE GOVERNMENT HAVE GIVEN FURTHER CONSIDERATION TO THEIR POSITION ON THE PROVISION OF THESE AIRCRAFT TO MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE ALLIANCE. AS I MADE CLEAR AT THE MEETING, WE HAVE ALREADY AGREED TO TWO POSTPONEMENTS OF THE NATO DECISION WHICH IS URGENTLY REQUIRED IF TIMELY PROVISION OF AIRBORNE EARLY WARNING COVER FOR THE NATO AREA IS TO BE ACHIEVED.

AS THE HOUSE KNOWS, WE HAVE MAINTAINED AN ALTERNATIVE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT BASED ON THE NIMROD AIRCRAFT AS A FALL BACK OPTION IN CASE OF FAILURE BY NATO TO AGREE ON A SYSTEM FOR THE WHOLE ALLIANCE. THIS DEVELOPMENT HAS SO FAR BEEN FUNDED AT A LOW LEVEL, BUT IF IT IS NOT TO BE DELAYED FURTHER A SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE IN THE RATE OF EXPENDITURE ON IT IS NOW NECESSARY. IN THE LIGHT OF THE CONTINUED UNCERTAINTY ABOUT THE PROCUREMENT OF THE AWACS SYSTEM BY NATO, WE HAVE DECIDED THAT WE MUST NOW GO AHEAD WITH THE NIMROD SYSTEM, WHICH, SUBJECT TO THE SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION OF THE NECESSARY CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS, WILL NOW PROCEED TO FULL DEVELOPMENT.

IN TAKING THIS DECISION THE GOVERNMENT HAVE TAKEN FULL ACCOUNT OF THE ARGUMENTS PUT FORWARD IN NATO FOR FURTHER DELAY TO ENABLE OUTSTANDING QUESTIONS ON THE PROCUREMENT OF THE BOEING E3A AWACS AIRCRAFT TO BE FURTHER STUDIED. OUR DECISION TO GO AHEAD WITH UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 LONDON 05372 311752Z

NIMROD, HOWEVER, WILL GIVE THE ALLIANCE AN URGENTLY NEEDED AND MODERN AIRBORNE EARLY WARNING CAPABILITY TO REPLACE THE SHACKLETONS NOW OPERATING IN THE UK AIR DEFENCE REGION AND IN THE EASTERN ATLANTIC AND CHANNEL AREAS. OUR DECISION DOES NOT EXCLUDE THE POSSIBILITY OF A COLLECTIVE NATO SOLUTION TO THE REQUIREMENT. IN DEVELOPING THE NIMROD SYSTEM WE SHALL AIM TO SECURE THE MAXIMUM INTER-OPERABILITY AND COMPATIBILITY BETWEEN NIMROD AND WHATEVER ADDITIONAL AIRBORNE EARLY WARNING AIRCRAFT THE ALLIANCE MAY EVENTUALLY DECIDE TO PROCURE. I SUGGESTED TO MY NATO COLLEAGUES THAT A SINGLE NATO AIRBORNE EARLY WARNING FORCE' THOUGH IT WOULD BE AN IDEAL SOLUTION, IS NOT THE ONLY WAY IN WHICH THE AIRBORNE EARLY WARNING REQUIREMENT COULD BE MET. WE SHALL CONTINUE TO WORK FOR ARRANGEMENTS WHICH WILL SECURE MAXIMUM MILITARY EFFECTIVENESS FROM THE RESOURCES WHICH THE ALLIANCE EVENTUALLY DECIDES TO DEVOTE TO THE AIRBORNE EARLY WARNING TASK.

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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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